Liquor Legislation—County Option. The trend of liquor legislation for the last four years has been steadily in the direction of prohibition. State wide prohibition has been enacted into law in several of the Southern States; local option has come to prevail in nearly every State in the Union where the traffic in liquor is not prohibited and the area of local elections has been formed and enlarged so as to give fullest effect to the prohibition tendencies. The year of 1908 furnishes two measures which are intended and expected to drive the saloon out of large districts in which it now flourishes. Ohio and Indiana have each enacted a county option law, by which the people of a county are empowered to determine whether the sale of liquor shall be permitted or prohibited in that county. The law in Ohio was passed at the regular session of 1908, that of Indiana became a law through a special session of the legislature, September, 1908, convened by Governor Hanly. Each law became an issue in the State campaign and the candidates for governor of the republican party, which was responsible in both States for the passage of the laws, were defeated. This significant fact needs explanation. It has generally been interpreted as a defeat of the anti-liquor forces. Such, however, is not the case, as an explanation of the liquor legislation of those States will readily show. That it is a defeat for the tendency toward State prohibition may be conceded.

Both Ohio and Indiana have gone far in their anti-liquor legislation; each has excluded the saloon from the larger portion of their territory by the operation of their local option laws.

Ohio in 1888 passed a township local option act. Under this about 1100 townships went dry. Supplementing this act, a municipal local option law was passed in 1902. Several municipalities voted dry as a result. In 1904 another step was taken when the people of a municipality were given power, by vote, to exclude liquor from residence districts, and in many municipalities the saloon was promptly voted out of large portions of the residence districts. In the meantime the license fee was raised from $350 to $1000, thus further restricting the saloons by such prohibitory fees. The temperance forces did not stop there, however. They passed on and began to demand that the county be made another unit for local option purposes. The advantage of this from a temperance standpoint is evident. Under the operation of the law one township by remaining "wet" could nullify the will of the surrounding townships and also profit by the control of the entire liquor traffic. The city or village could stand in the face of a large popular

majority of the rural community. The prohibition of the saloon in a township was futile of temperance results if the residents of that town could go over the line to a neighboring town which was "wet" and secure liquor.

Governor Harris recommended a county option measure and it was adopted early in the session. The law provides that on petition of 35 per cent of the legal voters of a county, made to the county commissioner or to a common pleas judge, asking for the privilege of determining by ballot whether liquor shall be sold in the county, a special election shall be ordered within thirty days, to be conducted under the regular election laws.

The result determines whether liquor shall be sold or not. If adverse to liquor all sales must cease within thirty days, and the amount of unexpired licenses be refunded to the liquor dealers. Three years is put as the limit time for a second election in the same county on the same question. Court procedure is provided for cases of contest. Violation of this law is made punishable by fine, but on a second or subsequent conviction the court must order the place to be abated as a nuisance and the convicted person is compelled to give bond of $1000 that he will not sell, furnish or give away liquor in violation of law. Under the working of this law outside of the larger cities there will be few places where the sale of liquor can be carried on. It will have in a large measure the effect of State prohibition. The fact that it did not seem to presage State prohibition is the secret of the opposition. The same is true of Indiana. Here, also, the saloon was already excluded from large sections of the State by the remonstrance law and the high license. For many years Indiana acted under the individual remonstrance law by which any person applying for a license could be prevented from securing it by the filing of a remonstrance signed by a majority of the voters of the township. This method became burdensome and the blanket remonstrance was adopted by the terms of which a single remonstance signed by a majority, prohibited the licensing of any saloons in the township. At the session of 1907 the legislature strengthened the liquor laws by a search and seizure act, by which liquors kept for unlawful traffic could be seized and destroyed as a nuisance, and by a stringent law to prohibit shipment of liquor into no-license territory.

The liquor question became the chief issue of local politics. The democratic party met in convention first and declared for local option by wards and townships. This was a wide departure from the tradi-

tional policy of the party, but expediency demanded it. The Republican party declared for local option by counties, and thus the issue was joined, not on the question of local option or no local option, but on the question of the unit to be used in local option elections. The campaign was well advanced when Governor Hanly called a special session of the legislature. Among other things he recommended a county local option law and after a sensational fight, it was enacted by a close vote on September 26, 1908, a little over a month before the election in which that very question was the issue. The law enacted differs only in details from the Ohio law. Twenty per cent of the legal voters is required for a petition and the limit for another election is two years. the law expressly continues in force the local remonstration law against the sale of liquor. At this writing (December, 1908), 55 of the 88 counties of Ohio have gone dry and several elections have been ordered in both Ohio and Indiana.

JOHN A. LAPP.

Old Age Pensions—English Act of 1908. According to the opinion of the Earl of Roseberry, the most significant piece of legislation passed by the English parliament since the reform act of 1832, is the old age pension act of August 1, 1908. It is important from the standpoint of social or reform legislation, since it is the realization of a policy to which both parties were pledged, and of a hope which has been strong in the minds of the English almost continuously since 1893.

From 1893 to 1895, the royal commission on the aged poor, under the chairmanship of Lord Aberdare, investigated the question of old age pensions, but reported adversely "in view of the financial and economic difficulties involved." Likewise the committee on old age pensions (1896–98), with Lord Rothschild as chairman, investigated the plans for a pension scheme which were submitted to it and reported negatively on the proposition. Several bills dealing with the question were introduced in 1899, and in April of the same year a select committee on the aged deserving poor was appointed. The committee reported favorably for a pension scheme with 65 years as the age limit, to apply to British subjects, and to vary from 5*s*. to 7*s*. per week, at the discretion of the committee, according to the cost of living. Criminals, people who had received poor relief, or had an income of more than 10*s*. per week, were to be excluded from the provisions of the bill. Their favorable report was conditioned, however, by a recommendation for the reform of the poor laws upon which, in their minds,